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REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 16-19, 21, 28, 30, 31 and 34-36 are pending in the subject application. Applicants have herein cancelled claims 8, 12 and 34 without disclaimer or prejudice to applicants' right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in the future. In addition, applicant has added new claims 39-41. New claims 39 and 41 depend from claim 14 in Examiner's claim group II. New claim 40 depends from claim 19 in Examiner's claim group II. Support for new claim 39 may be found in the specification as originally filed at page 12, lines 20-22. Support for new claim 40 may be found in the specification as originally filed at page 12, lines 27-29; and at page 11, lines 21 to 23. Support for new claim 41 may be found in the specification as originally filed at page 13, lines 14-16. Applicants maintain that the amendments to the claims raise no issue of new matter. Applicants therefore respectfully request entry of this Amendment. After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-7, 9-11, 13, 14, 16-19, 21, 28, 30, 31, 35-36 and 39-41 will be pending and under examination.

Restriction Requirement Under 35 U.S.C. §§121 and 372

In the November 8, 2006 Office Action, the Examiner stated that restriction to one of the following seven groups is required under 35 U.S.C. §§121 and 372:

I. Claims 1-13, drawn to a method for determining

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whether a peptide forms a phosphorus-based ester;

- II. Claims 14, 16-19, drawn to a peptide which forms a phosphorus-based ester with an organophosphorus agent;
- III. Claim 21, drawn to a peptide library;
- IV. Claims 28 and 30, drawn to a composition of matter;
- V. Claims 31 and 34, drawn to an article of manufacture;
- VI. Claim 35, drawn to a method for reducing the likelihood of injury due to exposure to an agent; and
- VII. Claim 36, drawn to a method for decontaminating an area exposed to an agent.

In response, applicants elect, with traverse, Examiner's Group II, i.e. claims 14, 16-19, drawn to a peptide which forms a phosphorus-based ester with an organophosphorus agent. Applicants traverse the requirement for restriction on the basis that the claims have a common inventive concept in compliance with PCT Rule 13.1. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.499, Rule 13.1 governs restriction practice in the subject national stage application filed under 35 U.S.C. §371.

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Applicants note that the Unity of Invention, as set forth in PCT Rule 13.1, is fulfilled when "there is a technical relationship among those inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. The expression "special technical features" shall mean those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art."

In this regard, the Examiner has deemed the common technical feature of the pending claims as "a peptide which forms a phosphorus-based ester with an organophosphorus agent." The Examiner asserted, however, that this element cannot be considered a *special* technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2 because the element is allegedly shown in the prior art. The Examiner stated that Cho et al. (Applied and Environmental Microbiology, 2002, 68(4):2026-2030) "teaches an organophosphorus hydrolase that forms a phosphorus-based ester with an organophosphorus agent."

In response, applicants note that the Examiner has not cited in Cho where such a teaching supposedly exists. In addition, applicants have been unable to identify such a teaching. Specifically, Cho et al. nowhere states or suggests that the organophosphorus hydrolase *forms* a phosphorus-based ester with an organophosphorus agent.

Applicants therefore maintain that the common technical feature identified by the Examiner defines a *special* technical feature which is a contribution by applicants

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over the prior art, thus fulfilling the requirement of unity of invention under PCT Rule 13.1.

Moreover, claim groups II and IV as listed by the examiner are drawn to a peptide which forms a phosphorus-based ester with an organophosphorus agent (claim group II) and drawn to a composition of matter comprising such (claim group IV).

Therefore, applicants respectfully request that at least the claims of groups II and IV be examined in this application.

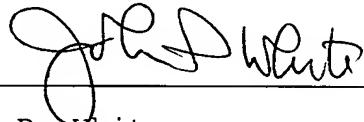
In conclusion, applicants maintain that claims 1-7, 9-11, 13, 14, 16-19, 21, 28, 30, 31, 35-36 and 39-41 define a single inventive concept. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the restriction requirement and examine claims 1-7, 9-11, 13, 14, 16-19, 21, 28, 30, 31, 35-36 and 39-41 on the merits.

If a telephone interview would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone them at the number provided below.

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No fee, apart from the enclosed \$225.00 fee for a two-month extension of time, is deemed necessary in connection with the filing of this Amendment. However, if any additional fee is required, authorization is hereby given to charge the amount of such fee to Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited this date with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

John P. White 2/8/07

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